Message

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Subject: PFAS Meeting--Follow-up

Thanks for taking the time to discuss the agenda for the upcoming PFAS meeting. As a followup to the discussion, I wanted to pass along a couple of comments:

1) The goals of the afternoon panels are a somewhat unclear (I.e., "identifying PFAS in Your Community" and "Communicating PFAS"). These may have been chosen due to the fact they were the topics/questions used at the National Summit. However, they were used with a different audience (a discussion among regulators versus a community engagement audience). What is the goal of each topic? Are these panel discussions we want to have before the community audience?

For example, is the "identifying PFAS" discussion intended to discuss the challenges in assessment (what methodology? What constituents?) And is that the discussion we want to have at this session in front of concerned members of the general public, press, community activists, etc.?

Similarly, for the "communicating PFAS," what is the expectation and goal? We are speaking to the community groups we are trying to effectively communicate with about PFAS and potential risks—is the goal of the panel to try to communicate effectively to the audience about these issues, or to discuss the challenges in how we, as regulators, effectively communicate these issue (which was a lot of the discussion at the Summit)?

We very much want to understand the goals and specific discussion topics for each of these panels as soon as possible so that we can understand what MassDEP can offer to those sessions.

2) "Regulatory Context"—in the opening remarks/presentations, we think it is important to have a discussion about the regulatory context in which PFAS are being assessed and addressed, and the challenges associated with these efforts. If EPA is going to be reviewing the action items from the Summit, it sounds like there will at least be some discussion about establishing an MCL, designation of PFAS as a hazardous substance, and development of tox values for some PFAS (hopefully, with target timelines for milestones). Will there be discussion about current challenges in addressing PFAS within the existing regulatory context, and what these actions may mean to future efforts? And we think the audience will need to hear an explanation of particular challenges with DOD's ability/efforts to address PFAS. From Massachusetts' perspective, we are dealing with several sites where DOD is the responsible party, and the community is particularly engaged, including on issues related to DOD's response. While I understand DOD won't be presenting at the meetings, it seems important that someone provide any explanation or statement? Similarly, we think this audience will want to know the status and projected timeline for release of the ATSDR report.

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